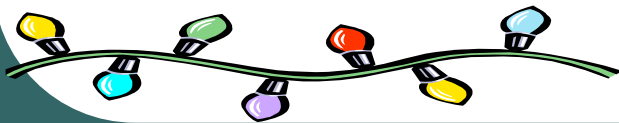


Outdoor Lighting Considerations:

- Buy/use lighting sets and extensions cords that bear the *Underwriters Laboratories (UL)* or *Factory Mutual (FM)* label and are specifically marked “for **outdoor** use”.
- Always look for the makers recommendations on the number of light strings that can be safely strung together and other precautions listed on the packaging for the lights you are using.
- Check all light strings for fraying, aging, and heat damage. Throw away any strings that show signs of damage.
- Always test your light strings before setting up your ladder-replacing broken/burnt out bulbs is much easier on the ground!



Take a Home Inventory

The holidays are a good time to update (or create) your home inventory. Take photos or make a video of items, and list descriptions and serial numbers. If your home is burglarized, having a detailed inventory can help identify stolen items and make insurance claims easier to file. Make sure things like TV's, Home theatre systems, DVD players, cameras, stereo equipment, jewelry, weapons, computers and power tools are all on the list. And remember to check it twice!



WEST DES MOINES POLICE
DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY EDUCATION/OUTREACH
#515-222-3333
WWW.WDM-IA.COM

Tips for SAFE and Happy Holidays



Brought to you by
the West Des Moines
Police Department



Be Prepared

During the year-end holidays, people are often busy, excited and sometimes a bit careless. This holiday season, don't let the spirit of giving lull you into giving would-be thieves a better chance to do their dirty work. They love the holiday season as much as everyone else, chiefly because it's a prime opportunity for crime!

Follow these tips to make it much more difficult for crooks to have a Happy Holiday!



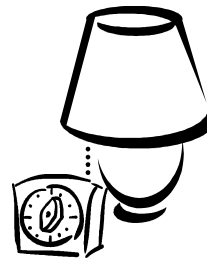
If you're shopping.....



- Stay alert and be aware of what is going on around you
- Park in well lit areas, and lock your vehicle. Hide bags, gifts and other valuables in the trunk or out of sight.
- Avoid carrying large amounts of cash.
- Carry your purse close to your body, or under your coat. Wallets should be in an inside coat pocket or front pants pocket.
- Teach kids to go to a clerk at a register should you get separated.

If you're traveling....

- Get an automatic timer for your lights.
- Ask a neighbor to keep an eye on things for you, shovel snow, if needed, park in the driveway on occasion.
- Have mail and paper delivery stopped. If it piles up, it's a sure sign you are gone.



At home.....

- Don't display holiday gifts where they can be seen from a window or doorway.
- Be wary of strangers soliciting for charitable donations. They may attempt to take advantage of peoples' generosity during the holidays. Ask for identification, how the funds will be used and if they are tax deductible. Check with the Iowa Attorney Generals Officer, Consumer Protection Division before giving. If you are not satisfied with any of the answers you receive, don't give.



- Test your smoke detectors.
- Use only fire resistant ornaments on trees, make sure lights are in good working order and keep live trees well watered. Don't leave holiday lights on when you are away or asleep.



- Avoid leaving boxes from purchase in plain site on the curb (TV's, stereos, etc.) These tell a crook exactly what brand new item you have inside.

